

Attachment A

Community Advisory Assembly

Terms of Reference

Community Advisory Assembly
Terms of Reference, February 2024

Note: The Community Advisory Assembly is a new group that started meeting in January 2024 as a pilot project. After the group was established, the Assembly members were asked to review the Terms of Reference as a draft, and suggest any adjustments. This review process was completed in February 2024 and the group endorsed these guidelines without making any changes.

Committee Name	Community Advisory Assembly
Vision / Goal Statement	To provide advice and guidance to the City on Council's Strategic Priorities, as well as important City projects, plans, and policies. There will be a focus on projects that are expected to directly affect the day-to-day lives of New Westminster residents.
Mandate	<p>The Assembly's role is to advise City Council and City staff across all departments on plans and actions related to Council's Strategic Priorities, and other current City projects, plans, and policies.</p> <p>Topics that come to the Assembly for input should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be expected to include changes that are likely to have a direct impact on residents; • Include elements, details or options that have not yet been decided / there is opportunity to shape or change; • Be early enough in the process where there is a genuine and meaningful opportunity for the Assembly to help shape the outcomes; • Provide sufficient background information and context for the Assembly to be able to provide informed, meaningful input; and • Include a plan for project staff to report back to the Assembly and the community how the Assembly's input was incorporated / influenced the outcomes.

	<p>Assembly members will bring their lived experience, values, stories, and expertise as residents of New Westminster to discussions.</p> <p>The Assembly will also have an opportunity to suggest topics for discussion and bring recommendations to the City for consideration.</p>
Membership	<p>The Committee will have a maximum of 36 members who are all current residents of New Westminster. Membership of the Community Advisory Assembly will mirror the overall demographic profile of the city, based on the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic area of the city (i.e. neighbourhood) • Gender identity • Age group • Housing tenure (i.e. renter or owner) • Visible minority • Indigenous identity <p>In addition to these characteristics, a diversity of lived experiences will be sought across Assembly members, such as including newcomers to Canada, people with disabilities, people with low incomes, etc.</p> <p>The aim is for the Assembly members to include a wide diversity of lived experiences, and truly represent the New Westminster community.</p>
Equity and Inclusion	<p>The City recognizes that residents face different barriers to participation in civic processes such as the Community Advisory Assembly. To support the inclusion of a diversity of voices and experiences, a variety of supports will be offered to Assembly members.</p> <p>Any direct expenses of Assembly members to attend meetings will be reimbursed. This includes the cost of transit fares, parking, and other direct costs for which members can provide receipts.</p> <p>Members who require childcare and/or elder care to attend meetings will receive a stipend based on the meeting length</p>

	<p>and a living wage hourly rate (\$24/hour in Metro Vancouver in 2023).</p> <p>Members who are low-income, who must miss paid work to attend meetings, or who otherwise need financial support in order to participate will be offered compensation for their time. Compensation will be based on the meeting length and a living wage hourly rate.</p>
Governance	<p>A Steering Committee will be established to help advise City staff and Council on what topics/projects are presented to the Assembly, as well as the group's process, evaluation, and other parameters of the pilot project.</p> <p>The Steering Committee will include representatives from City Council, City staff, resident(s) who are current or former members of City advisory committees, and one expert on deliberative processes.</p> <p>The Assembly will also adhere to the City of New Westminster Advisory Committee Policy (adopted September 9, 2019, and available on the City's website).</p>
Role of City Council	<p>While members of City Council will not have an official chair or membership role in the Assembly, Council needs to be accountable for the efforts made by the Assembly to provide advice and guidance.</p> <p>Efforts will be made to provide opportunities for relationship and trust building between Council and Assembly members through informal gatherings, such as a dinner event at the start of the Assembly term.</p> <p>The Assembly will provide regular updates to City Council on their work, through reports and delegations. The Assembly members will select Assembly representatives to present their recommendations to Council.</p>
Staff Supports	<p>Depending on the projects, plans and policies brought forward to the Assembly, a wide range of City staff will be available to the group to provide information and technical expertise.</p>

	<p>The agenda for the meetings and public engagement direction/advice will be provided by the City's Public Engagement Division.</p> <p>Administrative support will be provided to Assembly members by the Committee Clerk. This will include detailed notetaking during Assembly meetings. Meeting notes will be provided to Assembly members for review and any corrections before they are finalized. Final notes will be shared publicly, and other methods of sharing the Assembly's work with the broader community will be discussed and determined as a group.</p>
Term of Service	<p>All members of the Community Advisory Assembly will be appointed for a one-year term. Assembly members will be limited to one term.</p> <p>As part of the evaluation of the Community Advisory Assembly pilot, the one-year term length and ability to apply for a second consecutive term will be reviewed.</p>
Facilitation	<p>Rather than appointing a Chair, a professional facilitator who is not an Assembly member and who will not participate in the content of Assembly discussions (i.e. not provide their opinions/perspective on the topic under discussion) will lead the group in its discussions. The Facilitator's role is to support the Assembly in fulfilling its mandate.</p>
Deliberation	<p>Assembly members are tasked with providing advice and direction to the City, and in many cases, this will involve finding common ground among the membership. The Facilitator will work to ensure every participant has an opportunity to speak, and that a variety of formats and methods of collecting input are applied in meetings.</p> <p>Assembly members will be asked to commit to careful and active listening, and to weighing and considering multiple perspectives. Whenever possible, the group will be asked to aim for consensus: recommendations or advice that all members can accept. The root of consensus is "consent" – this is different from full agreement or majority rule.</p> <p>When consensus is not possible, minority opinions will still be recorded and acknowledged in meeting notes, reports to</p>

	<p>Council, and other methods of reporting on the Assembly's work.</p>
Quorum	<p>Regular attendance and active participation of Assembly members is a high priority, given the aim of the group to provide advice as a representative cross-section of the community. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the Assembly members (24 out of the 36 members).</p> <p>If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes following the meeting start time, the Committee Clerk will record the names of the members who are present, and the meeting will be adjourned.</p>
Attendance	<p>Members will be asked to tell the Committee Clerk in advance whether they will be able to attend a meeting.</p> <p>Assembly members will be asked to do their best to attend meetings, with exceptions made for unexpected life events. If an Assembly member is unable to attend more than a third of all meetings over six months, their further participation will be put to a decision by the Assembly.</p>
Meeting Frequency	<p>The Assembly will meet approximately once per month. Meetings will alternate between weekday evenings and Saturday mornings.</p> <p>The meeting schedule will be established and shared as part of the recruitment process for the Assembly, with the expectation that applicants have reviewed the meeting dates and can confirm general availability to participate according to the schedule.</p> <p>In extraordinary circumstances, and with the permission of the Mayor/Corporate Officer, the Assembly may meet more frequently.</p>
Evaluation	<p>Assembly members, City staff, and City Council will all be included in the evaluation of the Assembly pilot project. The evaluation process will include questions about the Assembly process, experience, and outcomes. Evaluation results will be shared with participants, Council, and the broader community.</p>

<p>Rules of Procedure</p>	<p>Committee procedures are governed by the current version of the City's Council procedure bylaw.</p> <p>Summary minutes will be developed from the detailed meeting notes for the purpose of satisfying statutory requirements for minutes under the <i>Community Charter</i>.</p> <p>The City also has an established set of "Rules of Conduct" for advisory groups; however, for the Community Advisory Assembly pilot, the group will be asked to co-develop a set of meeting guidelines to ensure respectful and productive discussions.</p>
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